

A Simple Way To Build Trust And Likability With Your Entire Class

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If you're a regular reader of SCM, then you know how important it is to build trust and likability.

Together, they cause students to want to please you and behave for you. They give your consequences muscle and meaning.

They help create a classroom your students love being part of.

In our books and here on the website, we've covered many ways of doing this.

In fact, everything we recommend either directly or indirectly supports these two invaluable teacher traits.

From kindness and consistency to calmness and humor to simply refraining from using negative methods.

They're the source from which flows the leverage you need to manage *any* group of students.

Today, I want to share with you a simple way to instantaneously build greater trust and likability with your entire class.

The way it works is that after first greeting your students for the day, **you're going to take a moment to express your appreciation for them.** You're going to share with them just a couple of things you like about them as a group.

It isn't praise, per se. It's more of an expression of your gratitude.

Example:

“I just wanted to let you know that I appreciate your hard work, your kindness, and your willingness to listen and help each other become better students. I appreciate how much fun we have together and how you smile and say hello when you walk through the door. I’m happy to be your teacher, and I just wanted you to know that.”

Then pause and allow your words to sink in for a few seconds before moving on with your day. And that’s it. It’s a wee little gesture, but it can be so, so meaningful to students.

Just knowing that they’re appreciated is a strong motivator – study after study proves this to be true – but it also results in a reciprocal appreciation for you.

It causes a disarming softness, quietness, and ease in their bearing and attitude. It opens their awareness to all that you do for them.

In some ways, it’s a restart, a refresher and reminder that through your constant, daily expectation of excellence, you know what it’s like to be in their shoes. You know how much they’re stretching themselves to become better, more responsible students.

There is a deep trust in this understanding that draws them ever further into your sphere of influence. You can almost hear their collective exhalation when you finish speaking and feel any lingering pressure release from the room.

It’s real and palatable.

Now, it’s important to mention that your students don’t have to be perfect to express your appreciation. You’re speaking to them both in terms of what you see now *and* who they’re becoming.

You're simultaneously fine-tuning, encouraging, and raising the stakes on your classroom tone and tenor while triggering the law of reciprocity that resides in every student.

So take a few moments to really think about your class. What is it about them that you're grateful for? What makes you smile? What are you proud of?

Now go and tell them.